

## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE JOINT MANAGEMENT BOARD**

**Meeting held by Video Conference on 10 March 2010 commencing at 11:00**

### **Present in Dover House:**

Alisdair McIntosh (Chair)

Kate Richards

John Ward

Edward Adams

[REDACTED]

### **Present in Melville Crescent:**

Charles Mullin

John Henderson

Robert Marshall

[REDACTED]

### **Item 1: Introduction & apologies**

1. Alisdair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

### **Item 2: Minutes of the last meeting & matters arising (other than those dealt with as separate items)**

2. The minutes of the last meeting were approved as a correct record.

### **Item 3: SO – Context , current priorities, forward look**

3. Alisdair advised the Board that current Ministerial priorities are focussed around the budget. The date for the budget was announced this morning as 24<sup>th</sup> March.
4. Announcements in the pipeline are dominating the work of Private Office, Press Office and policy teams. It will be particularly important to establish what the implications of the budget are both for the Scottish block grant and for Scotland more generally.

### **Item 4: OAG – Context, current priorities, forward look**

5. Charles advised the Board that OAG is equally keen to know the details of the forthcoming budget.

### **Item 5: SO-OAG Assurance Framework and future of JMB**

6. Robert referred to the paper which was circulated prior to the meeting. The Board was asked to agree that:

- The primary purpose of JMB is to provide the Additional Accounting Officer with oversight and assurance to enable him to perform his role as Additional Accounting Officer for both offices.
  - The revised terms of reference in Annex A should be adopted.
  - The frequency of meetings should be reduced from 6 to 4 (per annum)
  - When required the Board should meet without any other officials in attendance.
  - A narrative should be developed describing the relationship between the two offices and their governance structure, and briefings should be provided to staff in both offices based on the narrative.
7. The Board was also asked to consider whether other topics, in addition to those listed in the draft terms and of reference under responsibilities, should be considered by JMB. It was agreed that JMB might provide a suitable forum for strategic issues.
8. The draft terms of reference were agreed.
9. It was also agreed that:
- A description of the relationship between the two offices and the function of JMB would be prepared for incoming Ministers.
  - This would be related to the two offices' mission statements currently undergoing revision.
  - An office notice would be circulated to both offices which would describe the role of JMB, circulate the revised terms of reference, and invite staff to attend meetings as observers.
  - Meeting(s) would be held shortly after the election (either under the auspices of JMB or otherwise) to review the implications of any machinery of government changes for both offices.

**Action:** [REDACTED]

10. Alisdair will ask [REDACTED] to set dates for additional meetings immediately following the election.

**Action:** Alisdair / [REDACTED]

#### **Item 6: Results of the Civil Service Staff Engagement Survey**

11. A copy of the key conclusions for both offices, under the three headings of celebrate, improve and investigate further, were circulated prior to the meeting.
12. Charles advised that there would be an OAG staff meeting at the end of March to discuss the implications of the survey.

**Action:** Charles

13. Alisdair reported that briefing on the SO conclusions had been delivered by the consultants and two main avenues had been identified for taking forward discussion:

- Briefings in teams.
- An all staff event to take place during purdah. This is being organised by a small group of volunteers.
- A session with the Wales Office's senior management team to compare results.

14. Alisdair expressed concern regarding aspects of clarity around JMB highlighted by the survey results. JMB should identify practical steps to rectify areas where it scored poorly.

15. Overall, the results were encouraging and comparisons with last year are positive. SO and OAG to share plans for implementing the lessons from the survey and SO to investigate the possibility of inviting one or two OAG colleagues to its all staff event.

#### **Item 7: Projected Outturn 2009-10 / Budget 2010-11 / Payment Performance**

16. ██████ advised that the underspend against allocated budget reported at the last meeting had increased from £235k to £375k. The allocated budget at the start of 2009-10 was £8.2m but this was revised at the time of the spring supplementary to just under £8m.

17. Provisional budgets for 2010-11 have been allocated and are being reviewed by budget holders. Provision for 2010-11 will be approximately 400k short following the planned drawdown of EYF.

18. ██████ was asked to discuss the possible application of a vacancy assumption and a contingency reserve. The budget for 2010-11 should be no higher than the outturn for 2009-10 and is to be finalised as quickly as possible in correspondence. ██████ is to be kept informed.

**Action:** ██████

19. During February the offices paid 100% of invoices within the agreed timescale. Full year performance to date is 99%.

#### **Item 8: Corporate Issues**

20. ██████ summarised the following corporate issues:

- Work is underway with Internal Audit on its reports on the assurance framework and the maintenance of Dover House, and on the annual Statement of Internal Control.
- The SO accommodation options are being explored in the lead up to the expiry of the current leases.
- Work on the 2010-11 Business Plan is underway.

- Action is being taken to improve performance in handling Ministerial Correspondence and Fol Requests.
- [REDACTED] has started work on the 2009-10 Annual Report.
- Plans are underway to reduce the offices' carbon emissions both to enable them to contribute to wider targets and to cut costs.

21. Robert echoed [REDACTED] view that liaison between SO and OAG was much improved recently.

### **Item 9: JMB IT Group**

22. Robert reported that the MoU has been agreed and awaits signature. It will be signed at a meeting with Anne Moises, Head of ISIS, which is scheduled to take place soon. The signed version will be circulated to JMB.

**Action: Robert**

23. This meeting will be the start of annual meetings between SO/OAG and ISIS at a senior level. The agenda will include general relations, security and information assurance (including Portcullis review and CJSM) and cost recovery. Alisdair may attend for the start of this first annual meeting. A copy of the agenda will be circulated to JMB.

**Action: Robert**

24. Alisdair has agreed that Robert should retain the lead on IT and ISIS issues for JMB. The IT sub-group will be replaced by a smaller group consisting of himself, [REDACTED] and will be more project focussed.

25. ISIS also wish to meet to progress a Customer Account Plan. A date will be fixed for this meeting in early course and taken forward with the members of the above group. [REDACTED] has indicated that he would welcome more regular contact.

### **Item 10: Risk Registers**

26. Copies of the three risk registers (SO, OSAG & LSAG) were circulated prior to the meeting.

27. Alisdair asked that this item should appear earlier on the agenda at future meetings to ensure that sufficient time is available for discussion of this important topic.

**Action: [REDACTED]**

28. John Ward reported no changes to the LSAG risk register since the last meeting.

29. Robert reported no significant change to the OSAG risk register since the last meeting. Recruitment and retention of staff with required skills and competencies continues to be a high risk.

30. Alisdair suggested that possible changes in charging for Government legal services, including those of Parliamentary Counsel, should be added to the register.

**Action: Charles / Robert**

31. [REDACTED] reported an increase in the likelihood of risk 6 on the SO register, failure to manage legislative programme, due to the possible pressure surrounding the Queen's Speech shortly after the General Election. He also highlighted a change to the proposed controls for risk 3, failure of SO oversight of the Boundary Commission.

32. Alisdair suggested that there should be detailed discussion of one or two risks at future meetings. Alisdair will talk to [REDACTED] about ways of facilitating this.

**Action: Alisdair / [REDACTED]**

33. It was also suggested that there might be a comparison of the processes used in each office for updating the respective risk registers.

**Item 11 : Date of Next Meeting**

34. The date of the next meeting was noted as 18 May 2010.

**Item 12: Any Other Business**

35. No other business was raised.

[REDACTED]  
**Strategy Branch**  
**X 49012**  
**12 March 2010**